

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 1, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this Application, Applicants submit the following remarks, have canceled claims and have added new claims. The claims as now presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

Claims 1-22 were pending in this Application. By this Amendment, claims 3 and 12 have been canceled. Applicants expressly reserve the right to prosecute claims, as pending prior to this amendment, and similar claims in one or more related Applications. Claims 23-24 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-2, 4-11, 13-24 are now pending in this Application. Claims 1, 10, 20, 21 and 22 are independent claims.

Allowed Claims

Claim 22 has been allowed.

Claims 2-9 and 11-19 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1-9

Rather than rewrite dependent claim 3 in independent form, Applicants have rewritten independent claim 1 to include all of the limitations of claim 3 and then canceled claim 3. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in allowable condition.

Because claims 2 and 4-9 depend from and further limit claim 1, claims 2 and 4-9 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons.

Claims 10-19

Rather than rewrite dependent claim 12 in independent form, Applicants have rewritten independent claim 10 to include all of the limitations of claim 12 and then canceled claim 12. Accordingly, claim 10 is now in allowable condition.

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Because claims 11 and 13-19 depend from and further limit claim 10, claims 11 and 13-19 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons.

Claim 20

Claim 20 was amended to include language similar to that included within claim 3 which was deemed to include allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 20 is now in allowable condition for similar reasons.

Claim 21

Claim 21 was amended to include language similar to that included within claim 12 which was deemed to include allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 21 is now in allowable condition for similar reasons.

Newly Added Claims

Claims 23-24 have been added and are believed to be in allowable condition. Claim 23 depends from claim 20. Claim 24 depends from claim 21. Support for claim 23 is provided within the Substitute Specification, for example, on page 25, line 19 through page 27, line 12 and Fig. 6. No new matter has been added.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Amendment, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicants' Representative at the number below.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this Amendment, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0901.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 366-9600, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,



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